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PROGRAM DIRECTOR NAMED TO LEAD COOP MODERNIZATION

Crawford Will Develop National Integrated Surface Observing System

NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) has appointed Ken Crawford to lead the NWS COOP Modernization program within a national integrated surface observing system concept. NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Crawford, an internationally recognized expert in surface observing systems, returns to NWS and its Office of Science and Technology (OST) as program director of integrated surface observing systems.

“We looked for the best to assume the leadership of this critical component of the NWS mission, and we found the best in Ken Crawford," said retired Air Force Brig. Gen. D.L. Johnson, director of NOAA's National Weather Service. "In his new position, Professor Crawford will lead the development and implementation of a strategy to improve the national NWS observing system to support climate, hydrology and weather analysis and forecasting. Crawford also will help develop and implement concepts for a national mesonet and cooperative observing systems by focusing on improving and creating partnerships between NOAA and public/private weather observing systems."

"We are extremely pleased to have a person of Professor Crawford's stature help us improve the NWS national observing system,” said OST Director Jack Hayes. “His experience with developing observing networks will be very valuable as we look to strengthen the existing observing networks, as well as partner with other public and private organizations. More accurate and timely surface observational data ultimately will contribute to improved weather forecast models and short-term forecasts and warnings. Ken’s expertise in these areas will be a huge asset to the NWS.”

Crawford, a member of the faculty at the University of Oklahoma since 1989, has served as Regent’s Professorof Meteorology, and is Director of the Oklahoma Climatological Survey and the State Climatologist for Oklahoma. During his tenure with the university, he led the development of the Oklahoma Mesonet, an automated network of 116 remote observing sites and a joint program with Oklahoma State University.

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"Ken Crawford is a leader in the weather community who spearheaded development of the Oklahoma Mesonet, arguably the finest meteorological observation system of its kind the world," said T.H. Lee Williams, vice president for research and dean of the University of Oklahoma Graduate College. "We are very pleased to see this Oklahoma success story taken to the national stage and development of the national coop observation network modernization and a national Mesonet."

David L. Boren, president of the University of Oklahoma, concurred, adding, "The University of Oklahoma has long been proud of the partnership with the National Weather Service in improving weather predictions and in saving lives and property. Professor Ken Crawford is a national and international leader in the field of meteorology. He is the best possible person to head the NWS COOP Modernization effort."

One of the Oklahoma Mesonet's outreach programs – OK-First – was honored by Harvard University and its John F. Kennedy School of Government as one of five innovative programs in American government during 2001. OK-FIRST is a program designed to provide weather resources and instruction to local emergency management agencies throughout Oklahoma.

Crawford had a 30-year career with the National Weather Service before moving to academia. He last served as area manager for Oklahoma, and was a lead forecaster at the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Fort Worth, Texas, and a deputy area manager at the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Slidell, La. Crawford was a member of the National Research Council (NRC) National Weather Service Modernization Committee that studied and reported on the Future of the National Weather Service Cooperative Observer Network.

Crawford is a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society (AMS), a past-president of the National Weather Association, and is president-elect of the American Association of State Climatologists. His honors include a Commerce Silver Medal and the AMS Cleveland Abbe Award.

NOAA's National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories. NOAA's National Weather Service operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping to protect lives and property and enhance the national economy.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

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NOAA - http://www.noaa.gov
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